

LaVigna

Vol 1 (1984)

CHRISTMAS ISSUE

December 1984



THE MacLEODS: Jim, Carolyn, Carrie, and Jaime

KISSINGER MEETS CARRIE AND JAIME by Corinne Bilancio

Carrie (9 yrs) and Jaime (7 yrs) MacLeod, daughters of Carolyn Immordino MacLeod and Jim MacLeod and granddaughters of Jennie Bilancio Immordino and Bob Immordino, made the news in their hometown of Kent, Connecticut. Henry Kissinger, who recently bought a farmhouse in that locality, held a press conference in Kent that was attended by the two girls and their parents, Carolyn and Jim.

Carrie and her 7-year-old sister, Jaime, were sitting in the front row, right under Kissinger's distinguished nose; and when he passed the two girls on his way to his seat, Kissinger jokingly asked Jaime if she were a reporter.

Carrie was soaking up information for the newspaper she and her 4th grade classmates are about to publish and distribute to the lower grades at Kent Center School.

Pressed for her reactions to the historic occasion, Carrie called it, 'pretty interesting' and confessed, "I didn't understand all of it."

from "The Lakeville Journal"
10/25/84

Carrie was undoubtedly distinguished as the only person there to admit to not having understood it all.

The MacLeods moved to Kent from their previous home at the Hun School in Princeton NJ. Jim now teaches math at the Kent School, as he did at the Hun School, and Carolyn is in charge of the computer program at the elementary school in Kent. Carrie and Jaime both enjoy swimming, horseback riding and iceskating in Kent.

MATILDA BERTOLONE AND SISTERS

by Angelo Chianese

LaVigna received several responses to errors in the last issue's brief biography of the late Matilda Bertolone; among them the following correction from Angelojohn Chianese: "Please note that Matilda was in fact, one of five daughters of Pasquale D'Angelo. She was not, however, the youngest and is survived by her younger sister, Maria, who lives with her daughter Madallena (Millie) Walraven and son-in-law, Carl in Ewing Township. Maria, one of the liveliest, outspoken and controversial ladies you are likely to meet, is approaching her 90th birthday and is a woman I have been privileged to know, argue and dance a tarantella with. Evviva Zia Maria!! (Long live Aunt Maria!)"

At a recent **LaVigna** meeting, Lewis Bilancio and Angelojohn decided to combine their efforts to create a bio-sketch of Lewis' aunts (Angelojohn's great-aunts and grandmother Assunta). Extraordinary women of great courage and moral fortitude, this brief series takes a look at their origins, the town they came from, the children they raised and the stories they left us. Maybe a thread of your own memory will unravel pleasingly as you read through this account of the D'Angelo sisters--i Castigati.

FIVE SISTERS

(First in a series)
by Angelojohn Chianese

The groundwork for this series was laid years ago when Lewis Bilancio spoke with his aunt, Assunta D'Angelo Chianese, regarding the origins of the colorful family of sisters born to Pasquale D'Angelo and Carmella Camisa (nicknamed I Castigati) of Casandrino, Italy.

The five sisters, Francesca, Angelina, Assunta, Matilda and Maria, were born into a poor but proud peasant family in the tiny hamlet of Casandrino--one of a myriad of villages surrounding the megapolis of Naples. There was also a brother (his name eludes me) who died as a toddler.

Work was scarce, as was food, and Pasquale D'Angelo made ends meet by making and repairing shoes. Peasants were not always comfortable exchanging labor for money and so a home-made pair of shoes often brought a basket of sweet potatoes, or a cask of moscato wine or even a bale of colorful cloth

Continued page 4

Pasquale (Pat) Pedata

by Angelo Chianese

Pat Pedata, 57 years old, died November 7, 1984, following several months' illness. He was born in Trenton in 1927, one of four children born to Antonio and Maria (D'Angelo) Pedata. Pat was a veteran of both the Army and Navy and served in two wars: World War II and the Korean. He is survived by his mother, Maria; his older sister, Millie Walraven; a younger brother, Monsignor Armand Pedata of St. Joan of Arc Parish, Marlton; his wife Erma; three sons, Russell, Steven and Jay; and two daughters, Karen Weisneck and Cheryl Jones Foster.

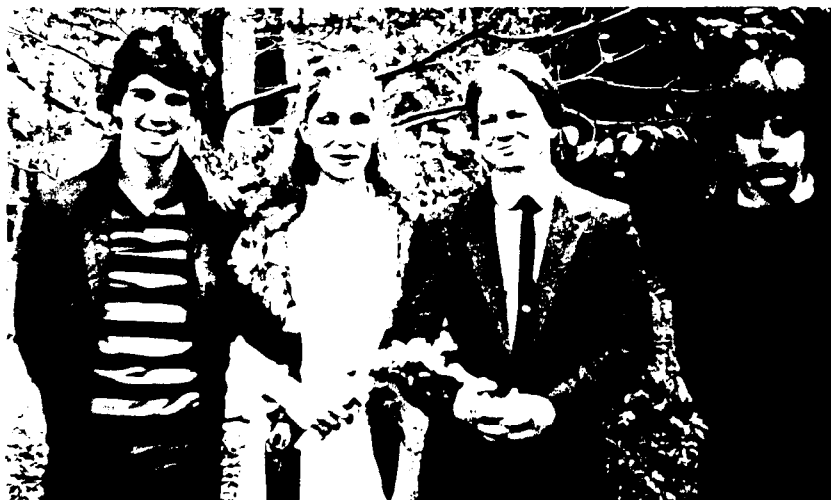
All my life I knew Pat as a man who understood the physical world (pipes and plumbing systems were his forte) and whose feelings were immediately available in his voice and in his face (much like his wonderful mom, Maria). It was impossible to be around him and not be moved. Pat projected himself straight from the heart. You knew a being was present.

I will never forget the surprise he had for me one day when I was home from college on semester break. He had just come by to visit my folks and somehow the conversation steered to poetry and literature (my mother loved poetry and wrote verse herself before we children filled up her life and leisure). Pat's eyes and words were aglow as he spoke with the spirit of one caught fire with passion. He quoted Byron, Shakespeare, Keats; coupled his excited perceptions with octaves of classical poetry; spoke, in short, with an oratory eloquence that inspired me far beyond what anything in my "professional" academic career had to date. The plumber quoted Milton: Was there no boundry to the miracles in God's creation?

FAMILY MAXIMS

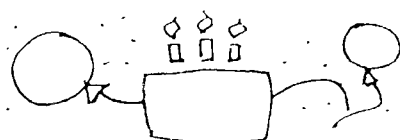
Chi va piano, va sano e va lontano.

This translates as "Who goes slowly, goes safely and goes far."



Henry Montague, Clothilda and Dean Acquaviva and Tim Montague at their marriage celebration at 90 Eggerts Road in Lawrenceville, October 18, 1984.

Photo by A. Roberts

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY**

Dec. 5	Corinne Bilancio
15	Carmen Armenti
16	Ray Johnson
21	Ivan Bilancio
23	Anthony Armenti
23	Brian Josephson
26	Christine Slaninka
31	Suzanne Roth
Jan. 9	Phyllis Gervasio
23	Beatrice Johnson
24	Joseph Chianese
27	Ralph Garzio
31	Celeste Armenti
Feb. 2	Steven Armenti
3	Frank Garzio
7	Bob Chianese (Joe's son)
12	Sandra Garzio
13	Marie Armenti
13	Angela(Chianese)Josephson
16	Lewis Bilancio
24	Dorothy Bilancio
Mar. 6	Angela Gervasio
8	Loren Armenti
14	Leo Bilancio
24	Anthony Chianese
24	Louise Chianese
25	Ralph Gervasio
26	Carol(Immordino)MacLeod
28	Pam Chianese
29	Angelo Chianese

**HAPPY ANNIVERSARY**

Jan.15	Jerry & Rita Chianese
17	Angela & Bruce Josephson
Mar.10	Pat & Jane Chianese
30	Carol & Jim MacLeod

TWO BECOME ONE

On October 18, 1984, Dean Vincent Acquaviva and Clothilda Anastasia Bilancio exchanged the simple vows of marriage at the home of the bride's mother Rose Bilancio. Service was conducted by the mayor of Lawrence Township, Gretel Gotterdam. The service, though basically private, was witnessed by Clothilda's children Henry and Timothy Montague.

The couple retired to their newly acquired State Street property in Trenton for their honeymoon.

EDITORS NOTE

The holiday season is one of thanks, joy and anticipation of a new year ahead of us.

LaVigna is thankful for the many contributions made in this year of its inception. Every type of contribution--writing and giving us family news and photographs, typing and the physical layout of its pages, donations of money and of time--all of these are vital to the continued success of our family newspaper.

We are joyful in sharing the company, good nature and wisdom of our family members. This is the highlight of the holiday season for so many of us who gather together at Christmas time for family fellowship.

LaVigna looks ahead to 1985, to the family members we will hear from and learn about (including some folks that we may have never known). These are the greatest joys for our family paper, when out of the blue one of you, who are one of us, makes contact with **LaVigna**, strengthening the bonds of the family circle.

None of us can see everyone, due to constraints such as time and distance, so **LaVigna** speaks for all family folks and to all family folks in wishing you--
a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Corinne Bilancio

Letters to the Editor

Dear Family Members,
My Job History

I left school in 1969 and I worked at DeLaval as a Machinist, on submarine parts, for six months.

I worked there with my father at the flower shop for five years. My brother took over the flower shop and I worked there for another two years. During this seven year period I was working on inventions and ideas of my own and spent a lot of money for materials and patent lawyers. I thought that I would become rich and famous only to realize that I was living the life of illusion.

I returned to school to study welding and then I got a job at Atlas Welding as a welder for three years. I was then working on military parts. From 1978 to 1980 I travelled all over the United States to forget about work for a while. Money ran out and I returned back to work in Hightstown, NJ at Prodelin, Inc., as an experimental welder in their research and development department. Working with the latest inventions on nuclear explosive cable with mechanical and electronic engineers I changed their design of their product and it was accepted by two of their engineers. And because of this I am thinking of returning back to school to study mechanical engineering for four years, at \$12,000 a year.

At this present time I am working for my brother Mario Bilancio. Under his instructions we have completed building about a half a house involving several different kinds of building trades such as structural design, carpentry, roofing, plumbing, electric and masonry work.

Words of Wisdom to the family: the more complex the mind the greater need for the simplicity of pleasure. When you work hard, you play hard.

Very sincerely yours,
VERDI BILANCIO

QUESTIONNAIRES

It isn't too late to send in the questionnaire from the October issue. We will be delighted to receive your completed questionnaire.

Dear **LaVigna**:

I am writing to you as a member of the Bilancio family. I am Clelia C. Bilancio, but my married name is Clelia Schultz. I saw the October '84 **LaVigna** and also read it. About my sister Tosca. But it was my brother Verdi who showed me the newsletter.

I would like to receive **LaVigna** whenever it comes out and would like to meet other members of my family, cousins, etc. For I have a son who is 8 years old and I want him to know them also. I am 30 years old. My birthdate is September 29, 1954. My son's birthday is June 14, 1976.

I never realized before how important it is to know about your family members until I had my son. It was just a few months ago when he started asking me, "How come I don't have cousins?" I couldn't even answer that. As for now I am divorced from my husband.

Thank you.

MRS. CLELIA C. SHULTZ

STAFF, WRITERS AND ARTISTS THIS ISSUE

Lewis Bilancio
Corinne Bilancio
Lucy Gervasio
Lorraine Anthony
Fran Bilancio
Angelica Roberts
Angelo Chianese
Clothilda Acquaviva
Dean Acquaviva
Sam Bellardo
Erma Candelori
Cheri Candelori
Clelia Bilancio
Verdi Bilancio
Art Bilancio
Terry Bilancio

THANK YOU!

LaVigna thanks the following for their donations:

Doris and Frank Bilancio
(**Bilancio Liquors**)

Sam Bellardo

Ange Chianese (Zip-A-Dee-Doo-
Dah Singing Telegram Co.)

Clelia (Bilancio) Schultz

Verdi Bilancio

Art Bilancio

Thirty winters ago the late Nicola Bilancio (father of Lew, Rose, Jennie, Sylvia, Leo and Lorraine) made front page news in the **Trenton Times** as an arctic athlete. A story his granddaughter Carolyn Immordino (now MacLeod) wrote about him while at Trenton High School follows.

WHO IS THIS MAN?

When one meets him one notices his clear blue eyes, his lean figure, and his tan face. After talking together one may learn of his physical abilities: pushups, track and snowbathing. Snowbathing?

With the first snow of the year, he rises and, closing himself in a room, begins exercising, running in place and deep breathing. Then he opens the window several inches at a time, letting in cold air. By increasing his exercises, he becomes accustomed to the outside air. Once in a while he takes some snow from the window sill and rubs it on his body. Now he is ready to go outside in his bathing trunks, where he continues his exercises. He runs and sits in the snow and rubs snow over his body. He is in constant motion.

Occasionally one can see him at eight in the morning after he has run around the high school track. He wears a teeshirt and shorts. The students wear winter coats and gloves.

Several weeks ago, at his birthday party, he did fifteen pushups, holding each one while his arms were extended.

Who is this man? He is my eighty year old grandfather.

72nd YEAR—No. 66

THURSDAY, JANUARY 14, 1954

Trenton, N. J.,

Winter's Coldest Fails To Nix Nick's Snow Bath



Sensational! You bet. In fact it's "a great shock" to plunge into a snow bank with no more protection than a pair of shorts. But take it from 69-year-old Nicola Bilancio, "It makes you feel fine." A resident of 517 Tyler Street, he has made a point of taking a bath in most of the snows that have fallen on the city in the last 32 years. And today — the coldest day of this Winter — was no exception. For him snow is just an added en-

joyment to his regular morning exercises. He frequently ends up his daily push-ups and body bends with a dash around the yard or three laps around the Trenton Central High School track near his home—come rain or shine or snow. He wouldn't, however, think of plunging in the snow without briskly preparing by rubbing his body and taking seven to 10 minutes of body-warming exercise. The father of six children and five

step-children and a grandfather seven times came to this country from his birthplace near Naples in 1903. He says he has worked all of his life—as a miner, railroad laborer, bread deliveryman, and now as a guard at the Sloane-Blabon plant. He is now employed as an investigator by the William J. Burns Detective Agency. Before he started his experiments to determine what was and what wasn't good for his body, Bilancio says he suf-

fered from rheumatism, frequent head colds and falling hair. Now healthily tanned and without an ounce of fat on his muscular, 124-pound body, he expects to live until 90—and enjoy every minute of it. In addition to exercise, he believes in careful dieting. He drinks a quart of lukewarm water for breakfast and eats mostly vegetables for his other two meals. In his spare time he writes poetry.

FIVE SISTERS (Continued)

in barter. Carmella would convert these treasures into a meal of love or an occasion to teach her daughters the art of stitching, passed down from her own mother, and her mother's mother, and so on. So many things were based on tradition here in Casandrino: first sons almost always took their grandfather's name; daughters took the name of other family members—necessitating the use of nicknames along with both Christian and family names. The stitching, as well as the nightly reciting of the rosary, was done in the family room—usually the biggest room of the house—which served as kitchen, dining room,

living room and also, depending on the severity of the evening's chill, as bedroom. You see, this was the room with the fireplace. One of those large, almost big-enough-to-walk-into fireplaces that adorned—of necessity, not luxury—the homes of even the poorest Casandrinese. There was, after all, no other heat source available for the evenings. Daytime, one thanked God for the sun's gracious warmth.

(Next time: Dismal economic prospects at home spur Pasquale's desperate try for the "good life" in America.)

SUMMERS IN ITALY

By Sam Bellardo

Calabria

Italy consists of twenty regions, which divide into various provinces with provincial capitals. For several years I have spent each summer visiting all of these regions with the exception of one--Sardegna. Although there are very special points of interest throughout Italy (per esempio, Torino, I Lagi, Liguria), my favorite regions remain Calabria, Abruzzi, Umbria, Toscana and the Trentino Alto Adige. These areas are still relatively pastoral, yet rich artistically, historically, and gastronomically.

I would like to present whenever possible a brief article on each of these regions and include a piece on Campagna since we are most of us Campagnese. To begin: CALABRIA.

Calabria is the southern-most region of Italy, one of the least visited, fastest growing, and most misunderstood. There is a great deal of prejudice among Italians themselves regarding the South and Southern Italians. It is incredible to say, but it is sadly true: Northern Italians do not visit their own southern regions. I am amazed at the misconceptions northerners have about their own south. This bias carries over into travel accounts of the region and even among Italian Americans. Our concept of the Southern diet is an American absurdity. Some of the best and most diverse food I have taken has been in Calabria. It is always exceptional and varied; the breads basic and crusty; abundant in sea foods; and pasta is prepared in many ways, alla Carbonara* being indigenous to the region.

Entering Calabria along the coast from the north is an awesome experience. The colors, the mix of sea and sky and rocky coast are simply impossible to describe. The atmospheric color renders everyone poetic. For better or for worse, the coast of Calabria is experiencing a great development, and the beaches are becoming popular. The region is primarily mountainous with a Northern Alpine aspect. Great beech, chestnut and fir forests cover the higher areas; lakes abound in the Sila and ski resorts have become tourist attractions. Arts and crafts in ceramics, metal and wood working, weaving and lace-making still thrive in the mountain villages.

Calabria was part of Magna Greca, as was Sicily. The Sarcens, Normans, Hohenzollerns, French and Spanish all in turn controlled the region. Murat had hoped to make the region (at Vibo Valentia) the intellectual capital of his kingdom. Cilea, one of the Romantic figures of recent Italian opera, was born at Palmi, a beautiful town high above the sea. In the 15th Century there was an Albanian immigration to Calabria. These towns still retain their identity: for example, San Cosmo Albanese in the Sila Greca, where my maternal Grandfather was born.

There are three Provinces in Calabria: Cosenza, Reggio, and Catanzaro. Most of Calabria is still unspoiled with a poor peasantry in the country and sophisticated cities. Some of the coastline is marred by oil refineries; and in summer it can be extremely hot at sea level. Only escape to the cool mountains and you will need blankets at night.

I recommend Calabria only if you can explore it at your leisure. It will not appeal in a Rome-to-Venice type tour. Its wonders are basic, subtle, earthy, simple, natural, enduring. The feeling is all-pervasive. One comes to terms there with one's Italian heritage; its diversity, its historical lineage with the ancients. One can leave the 20th Century for a little while, and relive that moment when our parents and grandparents left that ancient shore.

*Pasta prepared with bacon and egg sauce.

FRAN BILANCIO IN A CHRISTMAS CAROL

Fran Bilancio will appear as Topper in McCarter Theatre's presentation of "A Christmas Carol". Performances of this family favorite will run December 15 through December 30 and include many matinees. For showtimes and ticket information call the McCarter Theatre box office, Princeton, New Jersey.

MAILING LIST

LaVigna has an extensive mailing list which we are constantly updating. If any of you need a family member's address, you may write to **LaVigna** and we will give you the address if we have it. Please send a self-addressed stamped envelope with your request for an address.

On the other side of the coin, if you do not want us to give your address to other family members, please let us know as soon as possible by mail or by calling Dean Acquaviva at 609/393-4316.

FAMILY TOURISTS VISIT BATH

Terry Bilancio

At 122 E. Steuben St, Bath NY, home of Terry, Willie and William Bilancio, many family members have stopped overnight on their way to tour Niagara Falls.

In June, Rose Bilancio, Lorraine Anthony and Corinne Bilancio spent several days visiting Bath, as well as traveling to the Falls with Terry, Willie and William.

In September, Lew Bilancio, Bernice Smailer, and Bob and Jennie Immordino, stopped for a pleasant evening and morning as they traveled through the Finger Lakes area toward Niagara Falls.

Attractions in the immediate Bath area include the Corning Glass Museum, the Rockwell Museum of Western Art, wineries, and beautiful hill and lake scenery. Hiking, skiing, fishing and winter sports are all available locally.

CAPITONE AND LINGUINI

by Clarinda (Lucy) Gervasio

Like most Italian immigrants my parents, Giuseppe and Clarinda Bilancio, observed the Holiday season for religious reasons. It was obligatory for Catholics at that time to fast the eve of every Holy day. The rule of the "fast" was to eat only one full meal. Since Italian creativity around food is endless, the interpretation of this rule took many forms on Christmas Eve when our parents took the opportunity to make this one meal as varied and as large as their imaginations and ambitions would carry them.

As we children played on the sidewalk or at each other's homes, we could smell the fish sauces cooking during the day. The women, who were in diverse stages of cooking, would send us to the neighborhood grocery store to retrieve whatever last minute ingredients they may have needed. It was not unusual for us to make 3 or 4 trips to the store on that day.

Sometimes I would accompany my mother in the morning to the "fish store" where live eels swam in large tubs. She would pick the ones she wanted and Mr. SanPaolo, the "fishman" would weigh them and charge accordingly. Then she would choose the tiniest smelts and weigh them herself.

Upon returning home, Mom would clean and prepare the fish. She would already have had the baccala (dried cod) cooked after soaking it for several days. My sister Mary remembers the baccala stew with raisins or prunes, tomatoes, onions and potatoes. I remember baccala boiled and seasoned with garlic, oil and lemon. I also remember floured and fried baccala. Additionally, Mary recollects how my mother would pack the tiny smelts into a large oiled frying pan up to 4 or 5 rows with garlic, oregano, mint, oil and vinegar. She thinks Mom called this "fravaglia".

Not every Christmas Eve meal was the same. At different times we had baccala, purpo (octopus), scungili, smelts and other seafoods. However, no Christmas Eve meal was complete without eels. Mom would fix these capitone in so many ways. We had them broiled, floured and fried, and in sauce with linguini. The following is the recipe for this sauce.

- 1 med. eel--cleaned and cut into 1½" pieces
- 1 small onion--sliced
- 3 cloves fresh garlic--minced or sliced
- 1 large can tomatoes--crushed
- 1 small can tomato paste and 3 small cans water
- 3 Tbs fresh parsley
- 2 tsp salt, ½ tsp pepper--to taste
- ¼ cup oil

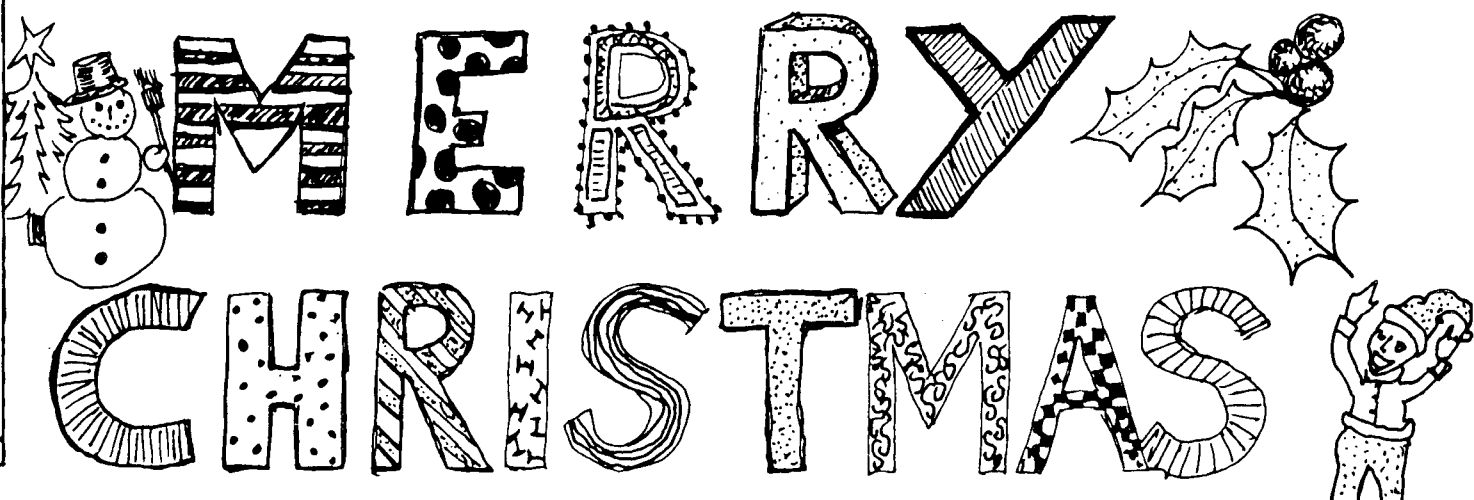
Over medium heat, saute the eel pieces in the oil making sure to cook all sides and sprinkle with ½ tsp salt. Remove from pan. Add onion and garlic and sprinkle with ½ tsp salt. When these turn a blond color, add tomatoes, tomato paste, parsley, remaining salt, pepper and water. Bring to a boil, cover and simmer for 1 hour adding water ½ cup at a time as needed. Stir frequently. Add sauteed eel and salt and pepper. Simmer for additional half hour.

Cook linguini macaroni, drain and serve with sauce over them. Arrange eel pieces around serving dish before serving.

My mother would serve this dish with small servings of capitone made in a variety of ways. A large serving of cooked greens usually followed along with a large mixed salad of escarole or endive, lettuce, watercress, onions and radishes in oil and vinegar dressing.

Before any meal on a religious Holy day my father would "bless the table" and say grace. This, however, was the only solemn part of the meal. Usually my brother Louis was home from college for the Holidays and all of our attention and joy was focused around this fact. Mary, Ralph and I knew that the "goodies" would come out of nowhere to celebrate the combination of Louis' homecoming and the Holidays. We knew that cousins and other loved ones would visit soon and the house would fill with merriment. Christmas Eve was only the beginning!

VIGNETTES



ALL TIME FAVORITES: Pignolata-Strufoli

by Lorraine Anthony

Christmas wouldn't be Christmas without the excitement that comes from making the traditional Italian desserts. Everyone in the family finds an excuse to be in the kitchen. Invariably one of the desserts served on Christmas Day is certain to be the traditional decorative honeyed pignolata-stufoli (pine nut clusters) which has been enjoyed by the Bilancio Family for generations.

2 eggs
1 3/4 to 2 cups flour
2 cups Wesson or peanut oil
pinch of salt



3/4 to 1 cup honey
2 Tbs. pine nuts (Optional)
1 Tbs. colored candied confetti/Jimmies

Place 1 cup of flour on board; break in eggs; add salt; knead together gently. Gradually add enough flour to make medium-soft, easily molded dough. Texture becomes softer with kneading. When very smooth, cut in half. Cover and let rest for 1/2 hour.

Roll out dough in circular piece about 1/2 inch thick on lightly floured board. Cut into strips 1/2 inch wide. Mold each strip gently to resemble a small rope. Then cut dough into bits which resemble a small grape or small marble. Distribute on lightly floured board to prevent sticking.

Heat oil in deep sauce pan. When hot, gradually add small pieces (about 6 Tbs. at a time) stirring constantly with wooden spoon. Brown lightly for 1 or 2 minutes; remove with perforated spoon. Drain on absorbant paper. (Use caution: If oil is too hot or pan not deep enough, oil could foam over.)

Heat honey in large deep skillet, stirring constantly, about 3 minutes over low flame. When very smooth, add all browned pieces, stirring constantly with wooden spoon. When covered with honey mixture, remove quickly; place on 2 large platters. Mold with spoon into desired forms. Top each form with pine nuts; sprinkle with colored confetti (Jimmies). Pignolata Strufoli keep fresh for at least 2 weeks or longer when placed in a cake box. Serves 10 to 12.

This dessert can also make an especially attractive Christmas gift. It may be molded into a Christmas wreath and arranged on a pretty tray or on a plate and wrapped in a gay Christmas paper. An extra large one can also be used as an effective centerpiece. **HAPPY HOLIDAYS!**

NOTES FROM THE GARDEN

by Fran Bilancio

There was no fig tree in my grandpop Giuseppe's garden when I first started working with him in mid-March 1979. But I remembered a time in the '50's when he had a fig tree large enough for me and my Father to climb together. Of course, my mother, wanting to be sure I didn't make myself sick on this laxative fruit, kept a close eye on me. But my father!! Watching him pick and eat those figs gave me all the reasons I needed for wanting to grow up. So here it was 20-25 years later and no fig tree.

"Grandpop," I inquired, "Where's the fig tree?"

"Feeg-a tree?" he replied.

"Yeah, where is it?"

"Oh-h-h," he sighed, "eet-a die"

"Die? Why?"

"E-why, e-why?" he said, impatient with my questioning. "I getta weak. No can taka good-a care and da cold, it-a kill-e da feeg."

"You mean you didn't bury it?"

"Ah-h-h, you guess," obviously pleased that I could infer correctly.

"Well, let's plant a new one," I suggested, with all the energy and enthusiasm of a new employee.

"Frankie, we gotta too much-a work already. Da weeds dey grow; da fence is-a broke; da eart-a wanna turn; da vines gotta prune; da radish gotta plant."

I picked up the grub hoe and headed back to the northwest corner to continue the tasks he had laid out days before. "Alright, Grandpop,

alright."

On a cold autumn morning over 11/2 years later, when I picked him up at my Aunt Mary Armenti's, he had wrapped and ready a small fig tree he had dug from her back yard.

We put the tree ball between the front seats of my '66 VW Bug, with the branches extending into the back. The three of us began our 3 mile ride to the lots.

"Frankie," he began, "you see-a da job I do?"

I was behind the wheel; but I knew by his tone he was in the driver's seat.

"First I tie da branch all-a togedder. Den I-a wrap wit cloth. But you godda take special care."

"Special care? What for?" I asked.

"No hurt-a da tip!! Dey tender!! he answered, as though I should have known the answer in the first place.

We arrived at the garden, built the usual fire, got out our shovels, and dug a ditch 3'x6'x11/2' deep in the northwest quadrant and laid the tree in it. "Grandpop, some people wrap their fig trees up or just bury them to the ground for the winter. Why do we bury ours?"

"Dis a-way we guaranteed." With this he took off his long overcoat and threw it over the tree in the ditch.

"Cover 'em up wit a board and put-a dirt on top," he ordered, as he turned round and headed back to the warmth of the fire.

We raised the tree the following spring and ate of its fruit two years later. The wheel had turned, another circle complete. Another cycle begun.

ANECDOTES

(Continued from last issue)

By Art Bilancio

Good morning editors and readers of **LaVigna**. Now it is early in the morning. It is 5:30 am, and I am coming to you with my words...Remember when I left you in the last **LaVigna**. I had been in the army just a few days. Capt. Berrent, he like the quantity and the quality of my work. In order to show me his appreciation, one afternoon he told me to go in the office and ask the 1st Sgt. to give me a pass to go home. In Trenton 15 miles away I had no home. I was not married. My father had a furnished room with my Aunt Antonetta at 128 Washington Street. I had been away from Trenton only 5 or 6 days. To make the captain happy and to be cooperative, I had no desire to yet go to Trenton. I went in the office and asked for a pass for that evening. The 1st Sergeant, with a voice as if I was 50 feet away (I was only 1 foot from his desk), said, "This is reception center. No pass." I went outside. Captain was waiting, asked if I got the pass. No. He went inside, told the sergeant to write the pass.

Almost every afternoon about 4:30 or 5:00, same story. Captain wait outside, I go in the office, come outside. Captain goes in, I get the written permit to leave the post for the evening.

Now this Saturday afternoon is different. I had been at Fort Dix a long time, 21 days. As usual the wife and child came with car to pick him up. Captain to me, "Go in the office and get pass." I go in the office. By now the sergeant remembers me. After I asked for the pass the sergeant, with a very healthy voice, as if I was 150 feet away, said, "No!" Outside the captain asked me if I got the pass and when I told him no, he went in the office. The sergeant said..."Captain, Bilancio has been here very long time (other men had been there only from 6 or 8 and no more than 10 or 15 days). He may be on the shipping list for Monday, and if so he can not leave the post." "I know the rules and the regulations of the U.S. Army. I have been in the service for 21 years." The captain from the sergeant's phone called the headquarters company office and he was told that my name was on the shipping list for Monday. The captain did not

want to lose me (I worked every minute of every hour of every day, and I was in a hurry to get the work done. Every day or when I went to Trenton, I came back to Fort Dix with some of my tools, or some of my paint or some of my brushes.) The captain for all these reasons was trying to see, this hot and humid afternoon in August, 1940 (remember no air-cooler those days), if it was possible to keep me at Fort Dix and in his company.

The answer from the phone was it is too late. After he put the phone back he said, with a voice of a baritone, "Sgt. Smith, this is a command. Give a pass to Bilancio until 5:45 Monday morning." The sergeant with a pleasant voice said, "He has to have his clothes checked." The captain said, "I will check his clothes now." The sergeant said, "If he will not be here Monday morning, you will be responsible." Captain signed the pass this time. Outside, the captain asked if I had any missing clothes. I assured him I had everything, then he told me to be back at Fort Dix 5:45 am Monday. I assured the captain that I would be back dead or alive early Monday. After a handshake he went in the car where his wife and his 10-12 year old daughter were waiting all this time and I started to walk the long way, about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile, to the highway where I would hitch a ride to Trenton.

On Monday I got up at 4. Walked from 128 Washington Street to the railroad station on South Clinton Avenue. I got a taxi to take me to my company area in Fort Dix. When I got off the taxi it was 5:30. There were hundreds of men in uniform (soldiers) with army bags. I went in my barrack, got my army bag and went outside. The captain was looking for me, wished me good luck. I climbed in one of the big army trucks. After couple of hours we got to Fort Monmouth, New Jersey.

It is late, about 9 am, and I am going to do some work now. Fort Monmouth in the next **LaVigna**. In the last **LaVigna**, corrections:

It was to be regards to all **LaVigna** readers, editors, relatives and friends, Cousin Frances and husband, Cerrios, and the rest of the boys.

Merry Xmas and Happy New Year to all.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

There will be a general meeting of all **LaVigna** readers and interested parties at 90 Eggerts Road, Lawrenceville NJ on February 3, 1985, at 2 pm. Be there if you can.

There will be a meeting to discuss articles, etc. on February 24 at 2 pm, also to be held at 90 Eggerts Road in Lawrenceville. Note that this is after the deadline of February 14.

Deadline for next issue:

February 14, 1985.

Let us know you love us,
send us your articles, pictures, etc.

The following is a letter received by Leo Bilancio, son of Nicola Bilancio (see article on page 6), professor at Oglethorpe University in Atlanta GA.

Dan A. Bilancio
20954 Diamond Shores Drive
Cassopolis, Michigan 49031
July 15, 1984

Dear Mr. Bilancio,

My name is Dan Bilancio and I am originally from Elkhart, Indiana and now live at Cassopolis with my parents, Arthur and Alice Bilancio.

The reason why I am writing to you is because I was looking through a book called "The National Faculty Directory of 1981," and I found your name (the only Bilancio in the book) and I was curious to see if you are related to our Bilancio family.

Our branch originated from the province of Apula, Italy. The city that my ancestors came from is Voltaerra. My father is Arthur Bilancio, his father was Pasquale "Patsy" Bilancio and his father was Vincienzo "Vincent" Bilancio. Allow me to illustrate:

Vincent Bilancio
(c.1860's-1950's)

|
Pasquale "Patsy" Bilancio (came from Italy in the 1910's)
(1891-1980)

|
Arthur Vincent Bilancio
(1929-)

|
Daniel Arthur Bilancio
(1966-)

My grandfather, Pasquale Bilancio, came over from Voltaerra, Apula (Italy) around 1911. He was the son of Vincent and Mary Jane Bilancio. The other children were Paul Bilancio, who never left Italy, Daniel Bilancio who came over from Italy in the 1920's and settled in the Elkhart-South Bend areas of Indiana. The other children were girls, thus they changed their names when they got married and did not have children of the Bilancio name.

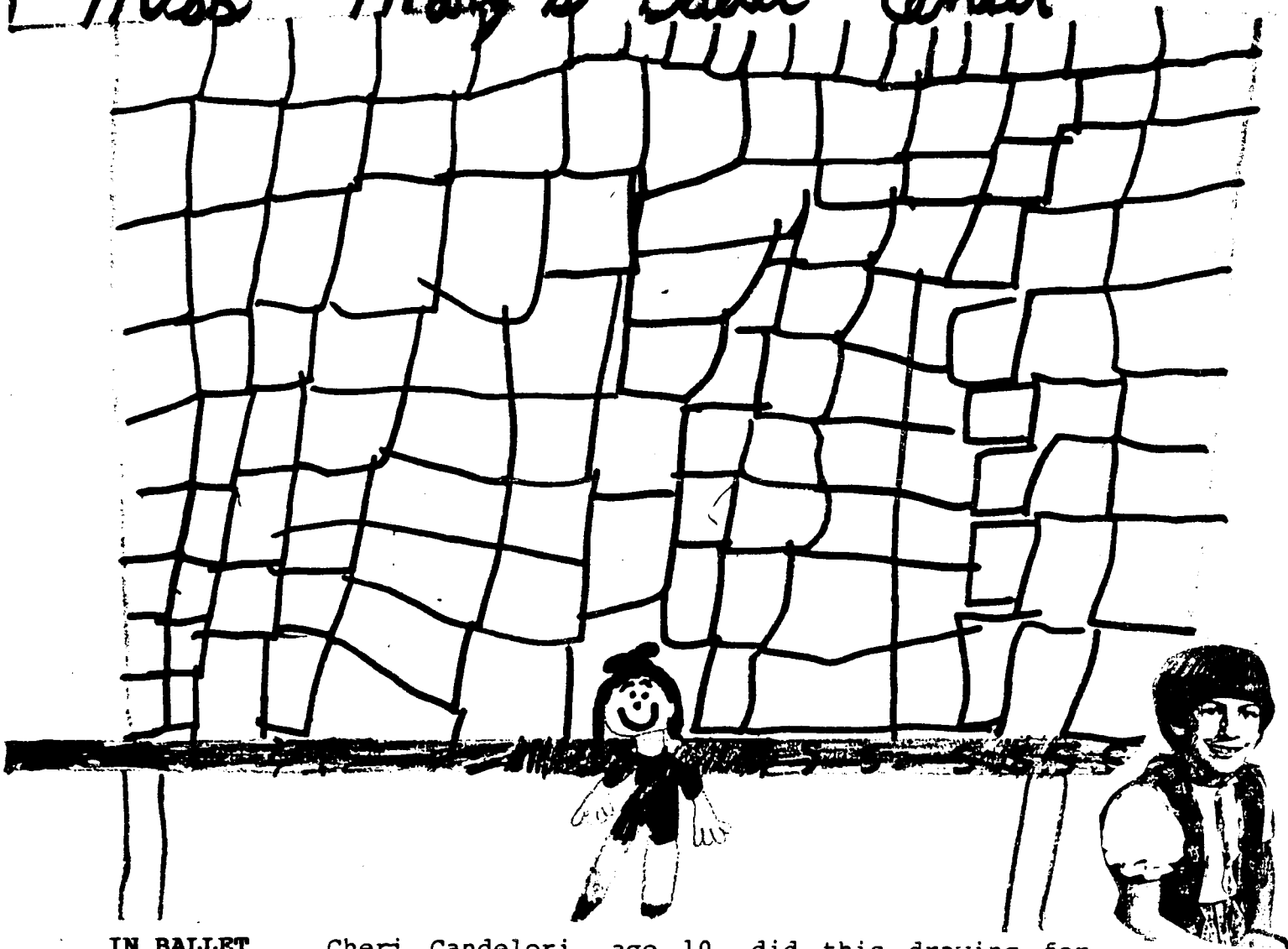
What I have told you, I can only draw several conclusions on how or if we are related. You could be a descendant of either Paul or Dan Bilancio, but as far as my grandfather, he only had one son, that being my father, Arthur Bilancio. I have also thought that you might be related to us through some cousins who moved to East Orange, New Jersey and Waterbury, Connecticut or you could be related to us through another branch of the family who originated from Italy farther back than my great-grandfather, Vincent.

Regardless of the outcome, I would still like to hear from you. My father and I were very surprised to see another Bilancio that we had not heard of. You must admit, there are very few Bilancios in America today, probably only about 100 or less, since we are fairly new in this country. I feel that we are related and would like to hear your family genealogy. I hope that you keep in touch!

Sincerely,

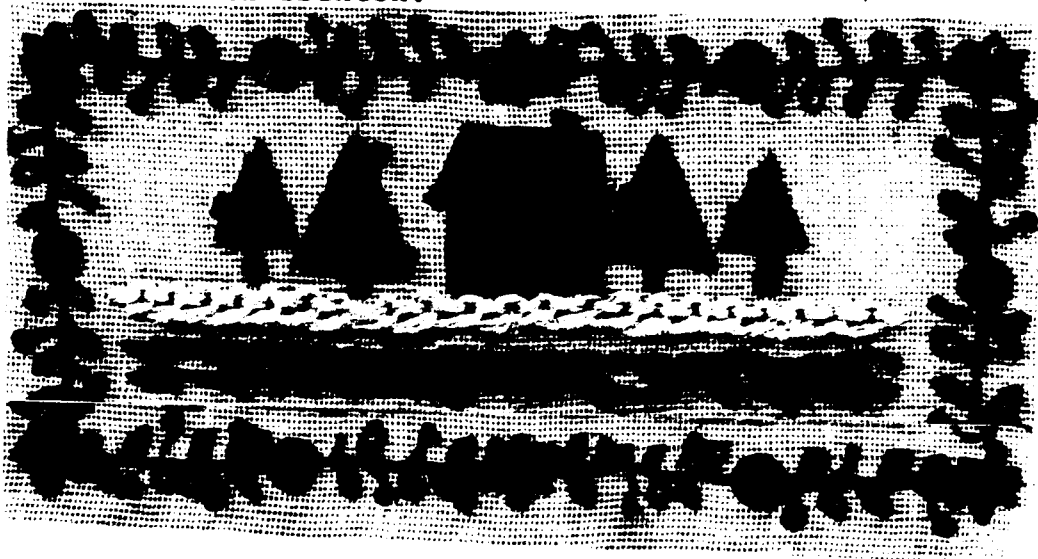

Dan A. Bilancio

Miss Mary's Ballet Center



IN BALLET

Cheri Candelori, age 10, did this drawing for LaVigna. Cheri has a sister, Cristine, 14, who also studies ballet, and a brother, Bobby, 16, who swims and plays tennis. Her mother is Erma (Armenti) Candelori and her father is Bob Candelori. They live in Trenton.



La Vigna
90 Eggerts Road